

# Pioneers Tell Of Many Happenings During 1901

Continuing the report of the Pioneer reunion which has already passed through three epochs and which will be concluded tomorrow, the story reaches the point where the chairman, Tasker L. Oddie, selected another old timer in the audience to tell of his experiences. "I would like to tell of a friend of mine, an old stand-by, one whom we respect and have great admiration for, and that is Bill Sollerender."

**BILL SOLLENDER.** "Ladies and Gentlemen: This somewhat reminds me of a story about a farmer who sent his hired man out to feed his stock one morning and the dog was on it."

"We have had lots of good fellowship and the evening has been passed away with laughter, funny stories, etc. I had in mind when I suggested a program, that we have so many tender memories, and I had in mind three subjects that I believe could be well listened to. The first was the pioneers themselves, the second was the pioneer women and the third subject that of the pioneers who have passed the Great Divide. We could pay lots of tribute to them all, and I want to write an experience that came into my life some eight or ten months ago."

"Last winter, I became well acquainted with Dr. Newell Dwight Ellis, who was filling Henry Ward Beecher's pulpit in the old Plymouth church. I remember one time I said, 'Doctor, I have listened to your eloquence many times, and very much interested, but will you permit me to give you a little bit of sagebrush philosophy?' He said, 'What state are you from?' And I informed him, Nevada. He said he had delivered two addresses in the Majestic theater in Reno."

"I said 'You are preaching your religion from the mountain crest. Your auditors are but half way up the mountain side and your preachings are not half way over their heads. But your great masses never hear your voice at all.' I said 'Doctor, I have never read a chapter of the Bible in my life. I don't say that boastfully. I did not go to the Bible to read anything, it was held in ridicule in my home, to my loss undoubtedly.' But, I said to him, that if I am right in the quotations from the Bible, Christ did not ask people to come and listen to His speaking, but He went out to them.' I said, 'Doctor, if I had your ability, your voice, etc., I would go out into the slums of New York City and I would spread some message that would improve the masses of this city.' He said, 'Why don't you come along and join me?' and I told him that I would go back to the desert and then come back and join him. 'Why have I never read the Bible?' Well, Doctor, as I stated, it was held up in ridicule. He said, 'Don't you believe in God?' and I said 'I believe in a great teaching force, but not in the religion of the Bible.' I said, 'Doctor, if there is no God in the silence of the desert, in these places of the desert where silence was oppressive, if the desert dwellers in the hearts of men and in the love of good women and in the prattle of babies, I will never come to New York City to seek it.'"

"Well, now I will get down to business. One of the first purposes of this meeting was for the good fellowship that we have all enjoyed and if there is a class of people in the state of Nevada that are credited to know each other's heart hearts, their welfare, and to feel that human side of life, it is the people

who have blazed the trail into this once desolate place and built it up and made it possible for others to come."

"Now we have gathered for the purpose of interchanging real fellowship, reviving old memories and old affection and we have. Now we want to take on the matter when we have a little run here, of discussing ways and means of founding a Pioneer association. We have the foundation, it is already laid; that is the cement of brotherly love; we laid it in 1901 and in that organization I have several thoughts to discuss with you. It is true that we have no meeting place, we have no organization or club of any character in Tonopah where the stranger or miner can be entertained who might come into our midst. The 'Pioneer Club' is an organization, and once we well as a national one on must have your dues paid up and the password as well. With the Old Timers there will be no password. The members of the club will be those old fellows who were founded in 1901 and that will be the only password and the only necessary and essential feature. We will establish an institution that will enable us to keep our doors open to all visitors that will come to Tonopah. You have heard people say that Tonopah is on the edge of the desert, in the future the desert on so on. I think the best way to enjoy it is to be a pioneer."

time light is upon Nevada, not only from a silver standpoint, but from all minor methods this matter should be discussed."

Now again, it will be an open house. All the old timers are in a position that they should have a place where we can get together as we have this evening. How easy it is to estimate little differences, just blot them out, you know, in a moment's time with a mile and a hand-clasp, and we get each other the old footing. We do not know what it is to have one more. Of course you all know Sollerender. I have the hand you know, but there is not anyone that will not say, 'Come on, let's forget quicker than I will.'"

"As we have no meeting place, we are out of all of them. They have been good enough, lastmaster, providing office, president or a chair man, etc. I have in mind that we should have an organization here in a building and found it upon some terms, no official capacities, but just adapted to mining life. In a measure, if we are going to have a general manager, then we should have superintendents, foremen, etc. I have in mind that we should have a machine men, blacksmiths and along the line like muckers who really do the work and have things a little better. I think this is something we should have and probably now, when we are a little better. Let us get on with it for a moment and discuss the problem and proposition of discussing a permanent Pioneer club."

"We can have a little more sage tea and more pumpkin pie and have another speech from Tom Kendall, etc., then go home."

**TASKER L. ODDIE.** "The idea that Mr. Sollerender has suggested we can digest, but I think for the next few minutes you can all study up some plans and then we can have a discussion on that."

"I would like now to call on Mrs. John Noy, one of the first women here, who made life bearable for us in the early days."

**MRS. JOHN NAY.** "I don't hardly know what to say, but like all the rest, I am very glad to see you all—especially the oldest ones, the ones who came during the first days. You all knew me and I am. When I came in from Belmont everybody thought I was crazy, especially the women and girls thought I was a little bit crazy."

"I came to a new camp like this and no women, only thirty or forty men in the camp. My brother was looking for what we call the company men. There were about ten perhaps, and just in a tent, with the old sheet iron stove, and I thought if he could do that well, I certainly could do a little better. I had things a little more comfortable and so I undertook to cook when I got there. By the way, I walked the last three miles. I had

all sorts of experiences, of course, as the old timers can testify to, and I had a great deal of trouble in furnishing board for the men I had boarding with me because it was hard to get supplies in here, but we finally managed to get supplies and live through the winter, anyway. Everything was not of the very best, but everyone was willing to do what they could and there was no kick among the men. I never saw such a splendid set of men in my life before as they were, and they were very cheerful under all sorts of trying conditions and in spite of all our troubles we all rather enjoyed it. I know I did, so of course, hearing all these stories and seeing all these faces here, brings to my mind a great many things that happened, funny ones, too, but they are too numerous to mention now, but after all, I am very glad that I had the experience and this is the first of the pioneer meetings I ever attended. I have been away, off and on, and this is the first time I have had an opportunity to see so many of the old pioneers together, and I am very glad to meet you all again."

(To Be Continued.)

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